

PROJECT NAME:	Black Skull Prescribed Burn
DATE:	May 20, 2019
DISTRICT:	Nez Perce-Clearwater NF, North Fork Ranger District

CONSIDERATION OF EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	PRESENT? (YES/NO)	MAJOR EFFECT? (YES/NO)	INFORMATION OR MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENT
A1. Threatened , endangered, & sensitive species or their habitats - WILDLIFE	Yes	No	See below
A2. Threatened , endangered, & sensitive species or their habitats - FISHERIES			
A3. Threatened , endangered, & sensitive species or their habitats - PLANTS			
B. Floodplains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds			
C. Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness or National Recreation Areas			
D. Roadless areas			
E. Research Natural Areas			
F. Native American religious or cultural sites, archeological sites, or historic properties or areas			

Projects in Roadless Areas

Project impacts on roadless characteristics as defined in 36 CFR 294(B)11 & (C)21

Roadless Characteristics	Present? (YES/NO)	INFORMATION OR MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENT
1. High quality or undisturbed soil, water and air.		
2. Sources of public drinking water		
3. Diversity of plant and animal communities		
4. Habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species and for those species dependant on large undisturbed areas or land	Yes	The goal is to mimic natural fire, thus using low to moderate fire intensities to create a mosaic pattern on the landscape however, it is expected that there will be some creation of openings as a result of prescribed fire (tree mortality within treated areas is expected to range between 30-50%). If higher intensities are observed ignition will cease immediately. There will be no direct ignition in old growth or RHCAs, however some old growth and mature forest may be affected by prescribed fire, principally backing fire. Observations are that where this happens it is unlikely total fuel consumption would occur and removal of overstory would be minimal. Additionally, the proposal is to apply fire to the landscape over a 5-10 year period creating furtyer mosiac of habitat conditions across the project area rather than affecting all potential habitat in a single year.
5. Primitive, semi-private nonmotorized and semi-primitive motorized classes of dispersed recreation		
6. Reference landscapes		
7. Natural appearing landscapes with high scenic quality		
8. Traditional cultural properties and sacred sites		
9. Other locally identified unique characteristics		

Projects involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, and/or Haul Routes

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	YES/NO	MITIGATION MEASURE/COMMENTS/INFO
1. Will road construction or reconstruction be required? Type of road and length.	No	
2. Will temporary roads be needed?		
3. Will road maintenance be needed? Who will perform?		
4. Is the area in a travel plan closure area? Year round or seasonal? Hunting season restrictions?		
5. Are haul roads part of an established snowmobile network?		
6. Are there public safety concerns for roads, trails, or other road improvements?		
7. Are there other improvements which will require protection?		
8. Will the project impact winter range?		
9. Will the project impact critical elk summer range or cause elk summer habitat effectiveness to be below FP standards?		
10. Will the project impact elk security?		

Projects involving Vegetation/Fuels Treatment

RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	YES/NO	MITIGATION/EXPLANATION
1. Will post-treatment stands meet R1 down woody debris requirements?	Yes	Despite low to moderate intensity it is expected that prescribed fire would result in the elimination of some down woody debris, likely small diameter material, but larger diameter fuels (100 hour+) would likely remain. Prescribed fire has the potential to drop some currently standing snags which will create additional down woody debris and, since tree mortality within treated areas is expected to range between 30-50%, it is expected that there newly created snags which represent future down woody debris.
2. Will post-treatment stands meet snag and replacement snag guidelines?	Yes	See above
3. Are activities proposed in PACFISH/INFISH RHCA or wetland?		
4. Is the area in a PACFISH/INFISH priority watershed? Is the stream fish bearing?		
5. Are there soil compaction concerns? i.e. Does the proposal involve ground based heavy equipment?		
6. Is the area in an active grazing allotment? What type of livestock? How many?		
7. Does the area meet FP standards for elk habitat effectiveness?	Yes	Forest Plan Standards for the EAAs within the project area is 100%. There are no motorized road or trails within the project area (Clearwater Travel Plan 2011) which would lower EHE below 100%. Prescribed fire may create openings however associated reductions in security would be offset by improvements to forage quantity and distribution. As a result EHE would not change.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	YES/NO	MITIGATION/EXPLANATION
8. Is the area in a visually sensitive area? Will mitigation measures be needed to reduce adverse visual effects?		
9. What other entities or agencies need to be contacted for coordination.		
10. Are there land line survey needs?		
11. What noxious weed control measures will be employed?		
12. Are activities proposed in old growth or replacement old growth?	Yes	There will be no direct ignition in old growth (or RHCAs), however some old growth and mature forest may be affected by prescribed fire, principally backing fire. Observations are that where this happens it is unlikely total fuel consumption would occur and changes to old growth characteristics would be minimal.

PROJECT NAME: Black Skull Prescribed Burn

DATE: 5/20/2019

PROJECT LOCATION: Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forest, North Fork Ranger District

The following tables display those endangered, threatened, proposed, candidate, sensitive, and management indicator species that are known to (or may) occur on the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forest.

WILDLIFE

Table 1. Threatened, Endangered and Proposed Species

<i>Species</i>	<i>Suitable habitat present in project area?</i>	<i>Effect on habitat?</i>	<i>Represents significant effect?</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Threatened and Endangered Species				
Canada lynx (T)	Yes	Yes	No	Project overlaps with several LAUs however only a single ignition area (109 acres) involves approximately 72.5 acres of modeled lynx habitat. Approximately 1.1% of the lynx habitat within the LAU is currently in stand initiation structural stage. Approximately 0.0% of the LAU has been regen. harvested in the last 10 years. The project does not propose PCT. Ignition area does not include any multi-story habitat. The project meets all VEG and LINK objectives, standards, and guidelines. Determination – NLAA
Proposed Species				
North American Wolverine ¹	Yes	Yes	No	The project includes modeled wolverine habitat. The 2014 Programmatic Biological Assessment for North American Wolverining identifies prescribed fire (general support, fireline construction by hand or mechanical, ignition, and mop up) and not presenting a threat to the continued existence of the Distinct Populatuion Segment of North American Wolverine based on the findings of the UFSWS. Determination - No Jeopardy
¹ Also a Forest Sensitive Species				

Table 2. Sensitive Species

<i>Species</i>	<i>Suitable habitat present in project area?</i>	<i>Effect on habitat?</i>	<i>Represents significant effect?</i>	<i>Comments</i>
North American Wolverine				See Table 1.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Suitable habitat present in project area?</i>	<i>Effect on habitat?</i>	<i>Represents significant effect?</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Ring-neck Snake	No	No	No	No suitable habitat in the Project Area.
Bald Eagle, Black-backed Woodpecker Flammulated Owl, Harlequin duck, Coeur d'Alene Salamander.	Yes	No	No	There is suitable habitat in the vicinity of the project but the project would not have an affect habitat.
Flammulated owl, Pygmy nuthatch	Yes	Yes	No	There are patches of flammulated owl and pygmy nuthatch habitat scattered throughout the project area with some falling within proposed ignition areas. Prescribed fire is generally seen as being beneficial for flammulated owl and pygmy nuthatch which rely on dry forests with open understory. The project may impact individuals and their habitat but is not likely to result in a loss of viability on the planning area, nor cause a trend to federal listing or a loss of species viability range wide.
Fisher	Yes	Yes	No	Fisher habitat within the project lies largely to the southwest and southeast with a stringer bisecting the project area. Several ignition areas incorporate fisher habitat. The goal is to mimic natural fire, thus using low to moderate fire intensities to create a mosaic pattern on the landscape however, it is expected that there will be some creation of openings as a result of prescribed fire (tree mortality within treated areas is expected to range between 30-50%). If higher intensities are observed ignition will cease immediately. There will be no direct ignition in old growth or RHCAs, however some old growth and mature forest may be affected by prescribed fire, principally backing fire. Observations are that where this happens it is unlikely total fuel consumption would occur and removal of overstory would be minimal. Additionally, the proposal is to apply fire to the landscape over a 5-10 year period creating furtyer mosiac of habitat conditions across the project area rather than affecting all potential habitat in a single year. The project may impact individual fisher and their habitat but is not likely to result in a loss of viability on the planning area, nor cause a trend to federal listing or a loss of species viability range wide

<i>Species</i>	<i>Suitable habitat present in project area?</i>	<i>Effect on habitat?</i>	<i>Represents significant effect?</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Fringed Myotis, Long-eared Myotis, Long-legged Myotis, Townsend's Big-eared Bat	Yes	Yes	No	Some existing snags will be undoubtedly lost as a result of prescribed fire however, since tree mortality within treated areas is expected to range between 30-50%, it is expected that others will be created which would eventually provide roosting areas. Additionally, the proposal is to apply fire to the landscape over a 5-10 year period creating further mosaic of habitat conditions across the project area rather than affecting all potential habitat in a single year. The project may impact individuals and their habitat but is not likely to result in a loss of viability on the planning area, nor cause a trend to federal listing or a loss of species viability range wide.
Gray Wolf ²	Yes	Yes	No	Gray wolves are tolerant of a wide variety of habitat modifications and disturbance. The project would have a negligible effect on Gray Wolves. The project may impact individuals and their habitat but is not likely to result in a loss of viability on the planning area, nor cause a trend to federal listing or a loss of species viability range wide.
Western toad	Yes	Yes	No	Reviewing NWI data there are wetlands which provide breeding habitat in the vicinity of the proposed trenching however toads may travel relatively long distances from breeding wetlands to upland areas. The project does involve the use of heavy equipment which could result in mortality of individual toads. However, population level effects related to mortality associated with this project is minimal. The project may impact individuals and their habitat but is not likely to result in a loss of viability on the planning area, nor cause a trend to federal listing or a loss of species viability range wide.
² Also a Management Indicator Species				

Table 3. Other Wildlife-related Project Considerations

Project involves road construction, reconstruction, temporary roads, and/or haul routes?	No	
	Yes/No	Mitigation Measures/Comments/Info.
Is the area in a travel plan closure area? Yearlong or seasonal? Hunting season restrictions?	N/A	No road construction proposed
If YES - Will project impact winter range?	N/A	No road construction proposed
If YES – Will the project impact critical elk summer range or cause elk summer habitat effectiveness to fall below FP standards?	N/A	No road construction proposed

If YES – Will the project impact elk security?	N/A	No road construction proposed
Project involves vegetation/fuels treatments?		Yes
	Yes/No	Mitigation/Explanation
Will post-treatment stands meet R1 down woody debris requirements?	Yes	Despite low to moderate intensity it is expected that prescribed fire would result in the elimination of some down woody debris, likely small diameter material, but larger diameter fuels (100 hour+) would likely remain. Prescribed fire has the potential to drop some currently standing snags which will create additional down woody debris and, since tree mortality within treated areas is expected to range between 30-50%, it is expected that there newly created snags which represent future down woody debris.
Will post-treatment stands meet snag and replacement snag guidelines?	Yes	See above
If YES – Does the area meet FP standards for elk habitat effectiveness?	N/A	Forest Plan Standards for the EAAs within the project area is 100%. There are no motorized road or trails within the project area (Clearwater Travel Plan 2011) which would lower EHE below 100%. Prescribed fire may create openings however associated reductions in security would be offset by improvements to forage quantity and distribution. As a result EHE would not change.
If YES - Are activities proposed in old growth or replacement old growth?	Yes	There will be no direct ignition in old growth (or RHCAs), however some old growth and mature forest may be affected by prescribed fire, principally backing fire. Observations are that where this happens it is unlikely total fuel consumption would occur and changes to old growth characteristics would be minimal.

COMMENTS: None

WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST: /s/ James Lutes

DATE: 05/20/2019